

Talking Points

Announcement of N.E.W. Customer Service Companies, Inc.

Meridian

Thursday, August 7, 2008

- Customer service is a huge and growing segment of the world economy.
- Today, we recognize a new partnership with one of the world's leaders in that field and Meridian, Lauderdale County, the State of Mississippi, the East Mississippi Business Development Corporation, Meridian Community College, and Cleveland Properties.
- Companies such as N.E.W. Customer Services can locate just about anywhere they want, but we're delighted they've chosen Meridian as the site of the company's second call center in Mississippi in the last 10 months.
- The call center in Tupelo opened in October of last year; when the Meridian operation begins in October of this year the company will employ about 600 people in Mississippi at competitive wages and benefits.

- The new call center in Meridian will be home to a customer care team responsible for fielding and managing in-bound consumer calls for one of N.E.W.'s largest clients, DIRECTV. With more than 17 million customers, DIRECTV is the nation's leading satellite TV service.
- This is another strong testament to our skilled workforce and the state's willingness and ability to meet the needs of growing companies.
- We know the national economic downturn is beginning to have an impact here in Mississippi, and \$4-a-gallon gasoline is hurting us.
- And, yet, Mississippi in many instances is more attractive than ever to outstanding companies such as this one because we have the educated, skilled workers necessary to help them be successful.
- Our employment levels remain at a near all-time high.

- Unlike previous years, there is no “one-size-fits-all” approach to economic development in Mississippi. We have seen, and continue to see, the benefits of diversity in the economy.
- We know that many, many companies – large and small, across the spectrum from manufacturing to services – make significant contributions to the quality of life in Mississippi.
- I’m here to tell you, we welcome them all.
- To Ray Zukowski of N.E.W. Corp., I just want to say thank you for the confidence you have demonstrated in Mississippi and this local area.
- We look forward to a long, productive, profitable relationship.

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